

Health Connection

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT LOCK HAVEN HOSPITAL

See clearly!
Help for cataracts

**Hospitalists are
here for you**

**We can help
you heal**
At the Haven
Wound Care Center

In case of emergency
Know when to go to the ER

**7 ways to
weight-loss success**



CHRONIC PELVIC PAIN

Causes and cures

Women who suffer from chronic pelvic pain may feel that the discomfort is something they just have to live with—a “side effect” of being female. But they don’t have to suffer. Chronic pelvic pain, or CPP, is a real medical condition. And that means it can be treated.

WHAT CAUSES PELVIC PAIN?

You may be suffering from CPP if you’ve had recurring pain in your lower abdomen and pelvic area for at least six months. The symptoms can vary. You may feel pain all the time or it may come and go. You may have a mild, dull ache or sharp, stabbing pain. In addition, you may have abnormally painful menstrual periods (*dysmenorrhea*), low backache, pain during intercourse, pain when going to the bathroom or rectal itching and burning.

The most common causes are gynecological:

- **Endometriosis.** In this condition, tissue from the uterine lining grows on other pelvic organs. When you have your period, this tissue swells and bleeds, causing pain and scarring.
- **Pelvic inflammatory disease.** This is an infection in the uterus, fallopian tubes and ovaries.
- **Fibroids.** These are benign (noncancerous) growths in the uterine wall.

TESTING AND TREATMENT

Your physician will evaluate your pain by taking a detailed health history and performing a physical exam. He or she may also order some diagnostic tests, such as blood tests, urologic tests, X-rays or laparoscopy (a minimally invasive procedure in which the surgeon inserts a thin lighted tube through an incision in the abdomen to view your pelvic organs).

Treatment depends on the cause of your pain and includes the following options:

- stopping ovulation with birth control pills or injections
- using pain relievers such as ibuprofen or naproxen
- performing relaxation exercises, biofeedback and physical therapy
- taking antibiotics
- getting psychological counseling
- having surgery



Stress incontinence: Help is available

It may be embarrassing, but stress urinary incontinence is a common problem among women. It’s also highly treatable. In fact, eight in 10 women who seek treatment see an improvement or are cured.

Stress incontinence occurs when any kind of pressure is put on the bladder, such as when you sneeze, laugh, lift, cough, exercise or even rise from a chair. Childbirth and weight gain are two common causes of incontinence because these conditions stretch the pelvic floor muscles. Hormone changes during menopause, some medications and other factors can also cause incontinence.

Your physician has many treatment options, including medication, strength exercises, biofeedback and, in extreme cases, surgery. So don’t let embarrassment keep you from asking for help.

More comfort and advanced care

Renovations of extended care wing completed

Lock Haven Hospital and its Extended Care Unit provide sophisticated medical technology in a patient-oriented setting to Clinton County and the surrounding area. Earlier this year, renovations were completed on the unit's C wing. These renovations will provide short-term rehabilitative residents with a comfortable, homelike atmosphere and make the 19-room wing more patient friendly and inviting.

AN UPDATED ENVIRONMENT

The C wing is now a beautiful, serene environment with new wall treatments, countertops and closet resurfacing. Each room includes Internet connectivity on request and a flat-panel television. Heating units and telephone equipment have been replaced throughout, and new handrails and wainscoting line the hallway. Three private rooms have new showers, while the wing's bathing room offers a large shower with a pull-down seat for easy wheelchair access. The unit also provides a whirlpool tub that's wheelchair accessible.

Lock Haven Hospital, a 59-bed acute care facility with an additional 90 long-term care beds, is the county's largest healthcare provider, with 26 active physicians and an additional 82 courtesy and consulting staff.

The renovated C wing provides short-term rehabilitative residents with a comfortable, homelike atmosphere.



! Let us care for you!

The Extended Care Unit at Lock Haven Hospital provides residents with physical, occupational, speech and recreational therapy as well as skilled nursing care. Daily group and individual activities are planned with the residents' involvement, and a full-time social worker assists residents and families. With 24-hour visiting, family members can stay with residents during their rehabilitation. Call (570) 893-5232 or visit www.lockhavenhospital.com to learn more.

Put out the fire

Heartburn can raise your risk for cancer

Nearly everyone has had an occasional bout of heartburn, or acid indigestion, after a spicy meal. But if you have chronic heartburn that occurs more than twice a week, you may be suffering from a more serious condition called gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). If you think you may be suffering from GERD, don't ignore it—without treatment it may eventually lead to more serious health problems, including cancer.

WHAT IS GERD?

Though it's commonly called heartburn, GERD is a digestive condition that has nothing to do with your heart. Food is carried from your mouth to your stomach through your esophagus tube, which is connected to the stomach by the sphincter muscle. The sphincter usually closes once food passes into the stomach, but if it doesn't close properly, digestive juices rise back up into your chest and throat. They cause the burning feeling near your heart—hence the name heartburn.

GERD can also cause a dry cough and swallowing difficulties, make asthma worse and disrupt sleep. Left untreated, it can damage the esophagus' lining and cause bleeding or ulcers.

A MORE SERIOUS DEVELOPMENT

GERD can also result in a condition called Barrett's esophagus, in which stomach acids actually cause changes to cells in the esophagus. These damaged cells can lead to esophageal cancer.

Barrett's esophagus is diagnosed with an upper gastrointestinal endoscopy. In this outpatient procedure, the physician passes an endoscope—a small, lighted tube with a tiny camera at the end—into the throat. This lets the physician look for tissue abnormalities and take a tissue sample through the endoscope if needed.

GETTING RELIEF

If you suffer from heartburn more than twice a week, see your physician. He or she may recommend lifestyle changes (see *"Don't go for the burn,"* below) as well as over-the-counter or prescription drugs such as:

- antacids (brand names include Mylanta, Maalox, Alka-Seltzer, Rolaids)
- H2 blockers (Tagamet, Pepcid, Zantac)
- proton pump inhibitors (Nexium, Prilosec, Prevacid)

Some of these drugs can also help improve Barrett's esophagus. In rare circumstances, your physician may recommend surgery to repair the sphincter.

Don't go for the burn

One key to soothing heartburn is to avoid the triggers that can lead to discomfort.

In general, the following lifestyle changes can help most people put out the fire:

- If you smoke, stop.
- Avoid foods and beverages that worsen symptoms, such as citrus fruits, chocolate, fried foods, tomato-based foods, spicy foods and drinks with caffeine or alcohol.
- Lose excess weight.
- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Wear loose-fitting clothes.
- Avoid lying down for three hours after a meal.



HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about stroke?

Take this quiz to find out.

1 A stroke occurs when blood flow is interrupted to your:

- a. heart
- b. lungs
- c. brain
- d. kidneys

2 Someone in the United States has a stroke:

- a. every 45 seconds
- b. every 4 minutes
- c. every 45 minutes
- d. every 4 hours

3 Which of the following are major risk factors for stroke?

- a. smoking
- b. high blood pressure
- c. high cholesterol
- d. all of the above

4 Which of the following is usually not a symptom of stroke?

- a. sudden numbness, weakness or paralysis of your face, arm or leg—usually on one side of your body
- b. sudden difficulty speaking or understanding speech
- c. sudden blurred, double or decreased vision
- d. sudden shortness of breath

5 How quickly must clot-busting drugs be given after the onset of a stroke to be effective?

- a. within 1 hour
- b. within 2 hours
- c. within 3 hours
- d. within 4 hours

ANSWERS: 1. C; 2. A; 3. D; 4. D; 5. C



Holiday health alert PROTECT YOUR HEART

The holidays are supposed to be a happy time of year. But for many people, they can end up being a particularly *unhealthy* time of year. Heavy meals, excessive alcohol, smoking, stress—they all can take a toll. Your heart is especially vulnerable. But knowing which dangers lurk can help you take control of your heart health this season.

STRESS INDUCERS

Three main triggers tend to cause holiday stress, says the Mayo Clinic:

- 1. Relationships.** Family tensions often increase during the holidays. What's more, those facing the holidays away from loved ones may feel lonely or sad.
- 2. Finances.** Spending too much on gifts, travel, food and entertainment can increase stress.
- 3. Physical health.** All that shopping, socializing, cooking, eating and drinking can be exhausting, especially for those already suffering from an illness.

STRESS REDUCERS

To avoid holiday stress and health problems:

- Exercise and get enough sleep. Both fight off stress and fatigue.
- Watch what you eat. Go ahead and have your favorite holiday treats, but do so in moderation.
- Find time for yourself—do things *you* like to do.
- Seek help. If the holidays overwhelm you with sadness, anxiety or physical problems, talk with your physician. You may be suffering from depression, which needs to be treated.

You can see clearly now!

Treatment can help put cataracts behind you

By age 80, more than half of all Americans have cataracts or have had cataract surgery. Cataracts, the clouding of the normally clear lens in the eye, are very common, especially in older people. Cataracts affect your vision, making it hard to read, drive a car or even see facial expressions. Though cataracts damage vision, they're also among the most easily treatable eye conditions.

CAUSES AND SYMPTOMS

The lens of the eye, which is made of water and protein, is the part through which light passes to help focus images on the retina. As people age, the protein can clump together and cause the lens to become cloudy, resulting in blurry vision. Cataracts often form slowly and have few symptoms. In their early stages, cataracts can often be corrected with eyeglasses or contacts.

Symptoms of a cataract include clouded or blurred vision, increased difficulty seeing at night, sensitivity to light, frequent changes in eyeglass prescriptions or double vision in one eye. Cataracts can occur in one or both eyes, but they can't spread from eye to eye. Unless it becomes completely white, the cataract isn't dangerous to the eye's health. If the cataract does become completely white—a hypermature cataract—it can cause

More than 1.5 million cataract surgeries are done every year, and more than 90 percent of people who undergo the procedure have fully restored vision.



inflammation, headaches and pain. These are uncommon, but usually require removal.

DIAGNOSIS

Physicians perform several different tests to diagnose a cataract. A visual acuity test uses an eye chart to measure sight at various distances. During the dilated eye exam, the physician uses drops to dilate the pupils so the retina and optic nerve can be examined for signs of damage or other problems. A tonometry test measures eye pressure. Since symptoms are similar for different types of eye problems, a physician will diagnose the specific ailment before beginning treatment.

Because cataracts are so common, it's important for people to get regular eye exams, especially as they get older. Age-related cataracts can start developing as soon as age 30, though they usually don't seriously affect vision until age 60. According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, people ages 40 to 64 should have an eye exam every two to four years, and people ages 65 and older should have an eye exam every one to two years.



Warning signs to watch for

According to The National Eye Institute, the following symptoms may mean a cataract is forming. Consult your physician if you have:

- hazy, fuzzy or blurred vision
- a frequent need for new eyeglasses
- a feeling of having a film over your eyes
- a change in the color of your pupil from the usual black to gray, yellow or white
- problems with light (for example, finding the right amount of light when reading or being bothered by sunlight glare or by headlight glare when driving at night)
- a temporary improvement in reading vision, which might occur as a cataract progresses, but the gain doesn't last long

TREATMENT

As cataracts become more serious, surgery can help restore vision. Cataract surgery is the most often performed and one of the most successful surgeries in the United States. Cataract surgery removes the clouded lens and replaces it with a clear, plastic lens that becomes part of the eye and needs no maintenance. More than 1.5 million cataract surgeries are done every year, and more than 90 percent of people who undergo the procedure have fully restored vision.

Good vision is an important part of everyday life. Consult your physician if you're having new or worsening eye problems. With regular eye exams, your physician can detect age-related eye problems and treat them early.

! Looking sharp!

Learn more about cataracts and other vision problems by visiting us on the Web at www.lockhavenhospital.com.

! Take care of your eyes!



George
Sadka, M.D.
Ophthalmologist



Stefano
Carpenetti, D.O.
Ophthalmologist

For you and your family's eye-care needs, call George Sadka, M.D., and Stefano Carpenetti, D.O., located at Susquehanna Eye Associates, 930 Bellefonte Ave., at (570) 748-8900.

Dr. Sadka, a board-certified ophthalmologist, has practiced for 24 years. Dr. Carpenetti, also board certified, graduated from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and has practiced for 12 years.

Healthy eating

7 winning ways to weight-loss success

The upcoming holidays present considerable challenges to eating healthfully. But with some careful planning and these helpful tips, you can stick with your weight-loss plan and enjoy a healthier lifestyle all year long.

- 1 Work with your physician.** He or she can help you plan for and meet your goals.
- 2 Set reasonable expectations.** Don't try to lose weight during the holidays. Simply maintaining your current weight will be a real accomplishment.
- 3 Eat a variety of foods.** If you know you'll be having high-fat foods at dinner, focus on lots of fruits and vegetables for breakfast and lunch.
- 4 Stay active.** Find 30 minutes a day to walk. If you're too busy—and who isn't?—break it up into three 10-minute walks.
- 5 Eat breakfast every day.** Studies show that people who eat breakfast are less likely to overeat the rest of the day.



- 6 Ask for a doggy bag.** When eating at a restaurant, eat half of your meal and bring the rest home for later.
- 7 Reduce stress.** Stressful times can cause many to overeat. Find healthier ways to cut stress. Exercise, get plenty of sleep and spend time with people whose company you enjoy.

When the ER should be your only option

How do you know when to treat a medical problem yourself, go to the emergency room (ER) or wait it out? For the following three situations, knowing how to react can mean the difference between life and death.

Chest pain. Chest pain that often comes with certain activities and then goes away easily is called stable angina. More than likely, if you've had this kind of angina for some time, you know how to treat it yourself.

Angina that comes on unpredictably or changes over time is called unstable angina. It may be the first sign of a heart attack. Get emergency treatment.

Asthma attack. Your asthma action plan tells you how to react to an asthma attack. But sometimes, even when you follow your plan, the attack may become severe. Go to the ER if:

- Your asthma medicine doesn't help.



- You feel a little better after taking your medicine, but serious symptoms come back quickly.
 - Your lips and fingernails are bluish or grayish.
 - You have trouble talking or walking.
- Insect bite.** Bug bites usually cause mild reactions—some swelling, minor pain, itching—that go away in a day or two. You can treat them with an icepack for the pain and an antihistamine to reduce swelling.

A severe reaction, however, can be life threatening. If you notice difficulty breathing, swelling of the lips or throat, dizziness, con-

fusion, a rapid heartbeat or nausea, cramps and vomiting, get to the ER.

In an emergency, don't drive yourself to the ER. Have someone drive you or, better yet, call for emergency medical assistance. The equipment and expertise on an ambulance can give you lifesaving first aid on the spot.

Lower your risk for hip injury

Many older adults are understandably concerned about falling and suffering a broken hip. After all, about 95 percent of hip fractures happen to people ages 65 and older, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Falls cause nearly all of these fractures.

Hip fractures can be devastating. About 20 percent of hip fracture patients die within a year of their injury. Up to one in four adults who lived independently before their hip fracture have to stay in a nursing home for at least a year after their injury.

WHO'S AT RISK?

- **Older adults.** Hip fracture rates increase exponentially with age. People 85 and older are 10 to 15 times more likely to break a hip than are people ages 60 to 65.
- **Women.** Women suffer about 80 percent of all hip fractures.
- **People who have osteoporosis.** People with this bone-thinning disease are more likely to sustain a hip fracture than those without the condition.

KNOW THE SYMPTOMS

You could have a hip fracture and not know it right away. If you injure your hip, look for these telltale signs of a fracture:

A test worth taking

Your physician can measure your bone density with a bone mineral density test. This special, low-radiation X-ray can reveal how strong your bones are. Because women are at much higher risk of low bone density than men are, most health experts recommend that postmenopausal women over age 65 have regular bone density tests.

Women under age 65 may also need to be screened if they have additional risk factors such as early menopause, a smoking habit, rheumatoid arthritis or a history of taking corticosteroid drugs. Ask your physician whether a bone density test is a good idea for you.

- severe pain in your hip or groin
- an inability to place weight on your leg
- stiffness, bruising and swelling in and around your hip
- a leg that's shorter than the other or turned outward

STAY ON YOUR FEET

The best way to prevent a hip fracture is to avoid falls by:

- Getting regular activity. With your physician's consent, doing activities like tai chi can increase your strength and balance.
- Reviewing your medicines. Ask your physician or pharmacist to look over all your medicines—both prescription and over the counter—to reduce side effects and interactions that could cause a fall.
- Getting yearly eye exams.
- Making your home safer by removing fall hazards such as loose throw rugs and stairway clutter and installing grab bars in bathtubs and showers.



A special physician for your hospital care

Hospitalists treat you right at Lock Haven

In an effort to provide “Quality Care, Right Here,” Lock Haven Hospital has offered hospitalist services to the residents of Clinton County and the surrounding area since 2006. In February, we expanded this program to a 24/7, full-time service.

Hospitalist physicians play a vital role in patient care and treatment, increasing the amount of contact patients have with physicians during their hospital stay and making hospital care more efficient.

WHAT HOSPITALISTS DO

The term hospitalist refers to physicians who work exclusively in hospitals. Once a patient is admitted, the hospitalist and the patient’s regular physician operate as a team. They communicate frequently to ensure proper care based on the patient’s pre-existing conditions and unique needs. Patients return to the care of their regular physician at discharge.

For example, if a patient is admitted for hip surgery, an orthopedic surgeon performs the operation. Following surgery, hospitalists partner with the surgeon in caring for the patient during the remainder of his or her stay. The hospitalist communicates regularly with the patient’s physician during this time and is available if the patient needs immediate care.

HOW PATIENTS BENEFIT

Hospitalists are the fastest-growing group of physician specialists in medicine today. This rapid growth is due in part to the many ways hospitalists benefit patients. They increase hospital treatment efficiency by requesting, receiving and analyzing test results immediately and administering care if necessary, cutting down on wait time. Studies show that hospitalists can reduce the length of a patient’s stay, sometimes by as much as two days. This helps families make fewer trips to the hospital and gets their loved ones home sooner.



Hospitalists can also help patients feel more comfortable about their hospital stays. Hospitalists are regularly available to assist nurses in making timely treatment decisions, and they take pressure off private practice physicians, who can’t be present at a hospital 24 hours a day.

In the end, the goal is efficient, quality care. At Lock Haven Hospital, hospitalists help us work toward that goal every day.

! Stay healthy!

To learn more about how Lock Haven Hospital can help keep you and your family healthy, visit www.lockhavenhospital.com or call (570) 893-5000.



Preparing your child for surgery

Surgery can be scary, especially for a child. As a parent, you can help your little one prepare for what's in store. That can make a big difference in lowering your child's stress and anxiety. It may even help him or her recover faster.

PREPARE YOURSELF FIRST

If you're anxious, your child will likely sense your apprehension. So be sure to understand all aspects of the procedure. This will help you stay calm and in control of your emotions.

Ask the physicians, nurses or staff to explain everything in simple, understandable terms. Talk with the surgeon without your child present to get the information you need.

8 TIPS FOR ANXIETY RELIEF

The American Association of Nurse Anesthetists suggests these tips to help you help your child before surgery:

1 Let your child express fears and concerns. Tell him or her it's OK to be afraid. Don't interrupt, minimize or belittle any fears.

2 Answer questions honestly and in an age-appropriate manner. Don't be too graphic or detailed. If you

don't know the answer to a question, find out.

3 Be honest. Don't say "it won't hurt" or pretend that you're taking him or her somewhere other than the hospital.

4 Discuss the separation procedure with your physician or nurse before the surgery. How will your child be transferred from you to the operating room?

5 Tell your child to expect some pain after the surgery by saying something such as, "When they wake you up, it will probably hurt a bit."

6 If the surgeon says it's OK, be present when anesthesia is given and when he or she wakes up immediately after the operation.

7 Be there as long as you're allowed. Sit at the bedside and comfort your child. If it's appropriate for his or her age and medical condition, make sure to snuggle, cuddle, hold and touch for comfort.

8 If he or she needs to stay overnight, ask if you can stay, too.

Remember, your emotions and behavior can play a big role in your child's surgical experience. If you become overwhelmed, take some time alone to work through your emotions. Try to remain calm, upbeat and positive whenever he or she sees you.

Get off the diabetes track

A condition of elevated blood glucose that precedes diabetes, pre-diabetes is serious and the stakes are high—diabetes can lead to complications such as blindness, nerve damage, amputations and premature death from heart disease, stroke and kidney failure. Studies show that even with pre-diabetes, damage to the heart and blood vessels may already be under way. Making lifestyle changes can bring your blood glucose level to the normal range and even turn back the clock on the disease's progression. People with pre-diabetes should:

- **Move!** And get at least 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity.
- **Lose weight.** Even a modest loss of 5 percent to 10 percent of body weight makes a difference.

- **Eat a low-fat, low-calorie diet.** Include plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- **Take heart-smart measures.** Quit smoking, control blood pressure and reduce cholesterol.



! Are you at risk?

Talk with your physician about your risk factors. Or visit www.lockhavenhospital.com to find more health resources related to diabetes.

We can help you heal!

In our continuing effort to provide "Quality Care, Right Here," the **Haven Wound Care Center** offers patients with chronic wounds treatment here in Clinton County. Wound treatment typically involves several hospital visits, and convenient patient access is essential.



The center treats patients with chronic nonhealing wounds, including diabetic, pressure, nonacute post-traumatic and atypical wounds and wounds secondary to arterial or other vascular disease.

Marcus Riedhammer, M.D., the center's medical director, has practiced wound care since 2004 and has extensive knowledge in current practices and procedures in the field. John Hanna, PA-C, practices at the center under the direction of Dr. Riedhammer.

! Take action!

If you or a loved one has a chronic wound that won't heal, don't delay in calling the Haven Wound Care Center at (570) 748-0474, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Wound Care Center is conveniently located in the Lock Haven Medical Arts Building at 208 East Church St., Suite 300, in downtown Lock Haven.

www.lockhavenhospital.com

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